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**Metro Board of Directors Approves Plan to help Businesses During Construction of the Crenshaw/LAX rail line**

The Metro Board of Directors Thursday approved a package of initiatives to help businesses that face economic losses due to construction of the Crenshaw/LAX rail line.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Metro board member Jacquelyn DuPont Walker and Mayor Eric Garcetti introduced the motion to help businesses offset any challenges from rail construction such as street closures and loss of street parking.

The key component of the assistance plan, initially proposed by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas last July, will be a business solution center to advise businesses in financial planning, grant applications, operations and navigating regulations.

“I salute director DuPont-Walker for her innovation and Mayor Garcetti for his attentiveness to the community,” Ridley-Thomas said.

“The Crenshaw/LAX line needs to be win-win for everyone in the community. The long-term economic gains of the rail line can’t come at the cost of an immediate

threat to our local businesses. These businesses are the backbone of our community, the very community the rail line will serve.”

African Americans voted overwhelmingly to support Measure R, the 2008 ballot measure that will raise \$40 billion for transit projects.

Ridley-Thomas emphasized the board’s action “is only the beginning,” because Metro’s staff will have to present an implementation plan to the board in April. “This has to be a robustly supported and smartly executed effort,” Ridley-Thomas said. “The Crenshaw line’s construction must be a rising tide that lifts all boats.”

“As a business owner along the Crenshaw corridor, I am encouraged by the action taken by the Metro Board to assist businesses along the Crenshaw/LAX Line during the construction of the line,” said Greg Dulan, owner of Dulan’s on Crenshaw. “While the details of the program are not yet known and it remains to be seen how effective the program will be, Metro can become a model for transit agencies across the nation by showing leadership in ensuring that business are supported. I commend the authors of this motion for hearing the concerns of the community and taking action.”

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